

Today, the House Resources Committee agreed to two amendments introduced by Congressman Jim Costa to the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act. The Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act updates the Endangered Species Act. Both amendments recognize the importance of local planning agencies and identify a role for them when considering recovery planning of endangered species.

The first amendment gives a voice to local preservation efforts. "Like the Super Williamson Act," whose intent is to protect prime agricultural land and provide habitat for native species, this amendment also accomplishes these goals. In many cases, agricultural land in our Valley is one of the best hedges against unplanned growth. In addition, this amendment also allows for input on local projects like the San Joaquin River Parkway that represents a multi-level agency effort to preserve, maintain and enhance a 23 mile stretch of the San Joaquin River," Costa said.

Congressman Costa's second amendment reflects local communities' efforts to develop spheres of influence to affect planned growth. "If Congress wants to modify the Endangered Species Act, it must be done in a balanced and reasonable fashion," Costa stated. "My amendments reflect the smart planning decisions local communities are capable of making that can enhance the prospects for species survival without negative impact to the community as a whole."

The Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act is a bi-partisan measure introduced by Congressmen Richard Pombo and Dennis Cardoza. It is meant to improve and update the original 1973 Endangered Species Act. The Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act was voted on and passed the House Resources Committee today. It will be voted on by the House of Representatives the week of September 26, 2005.

"I look forward to working with my colleagues to make a common-sense recovery plan that makes changes that are needed to improve the original 1973 Act," Costa concluded.

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